

[54] APPARATUS FOR THREADING CLOSURES

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[52] U.S. Cl. 72/113; 72/115; 413/46; 413/56; 413/23

[58] Field of Search 413/23, 56, 1, 46; 72/112, 102, 113, 103, 115; 220/288

[56] References Cited

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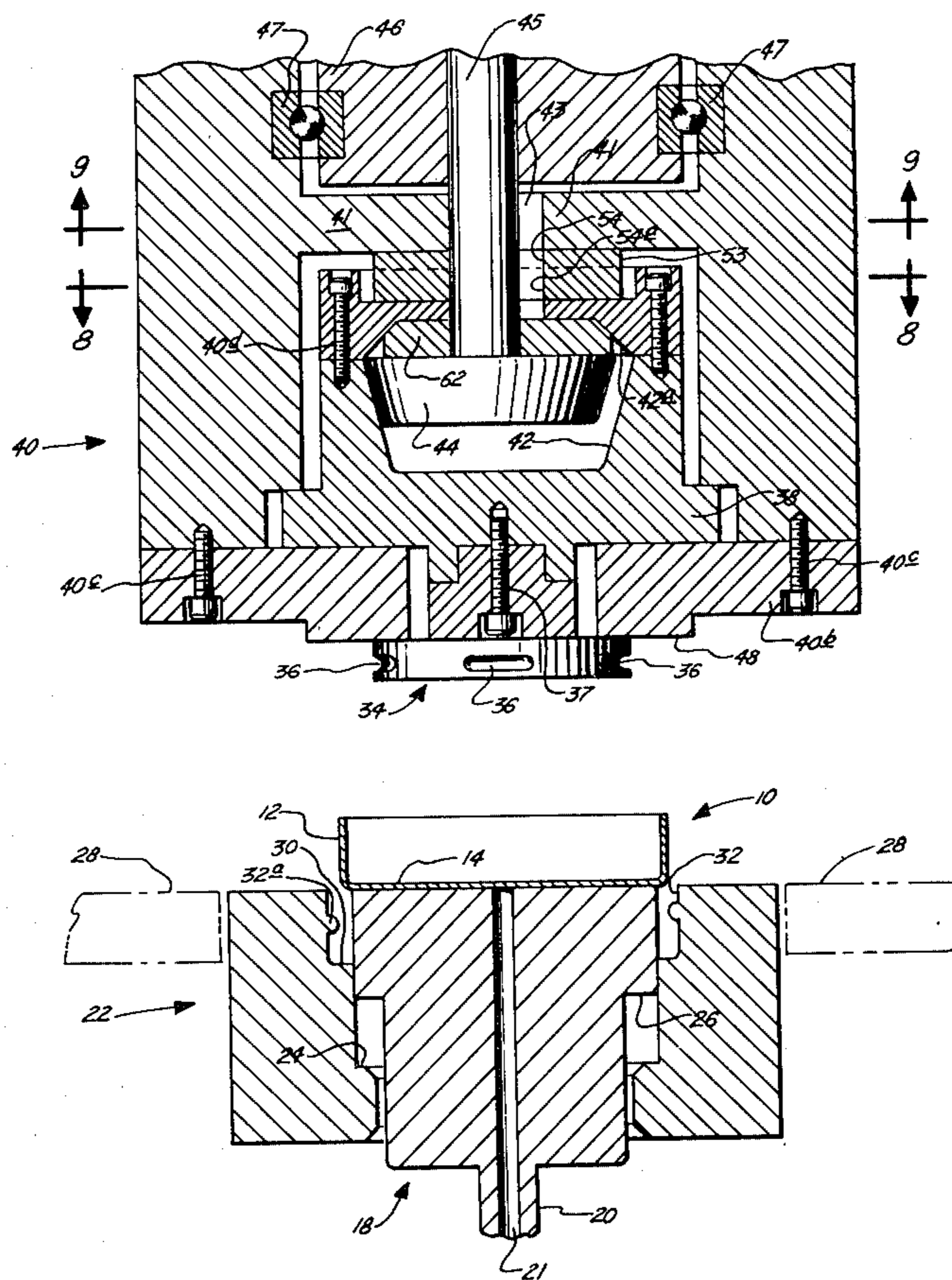
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[57] ABSTRACT

An apparatus for threading a closure having cylindrical walls which includes securing the closure in a stationary nest, inserting a threading tool having indentions on the outside thereof into the interior of the closure, moving the closure into a ring having projecting threads on the inside thereof around the outside walls of said closure, moving the threading tool into contact with the interior portion of the closure upon which threads are to be formed, and moving the threading tool around the interior portion of the stationary closure in an orbital path to form threads in the closure without rotating the threading tool about the threading tool axis.

10 Claims, 9 Drawing Figures



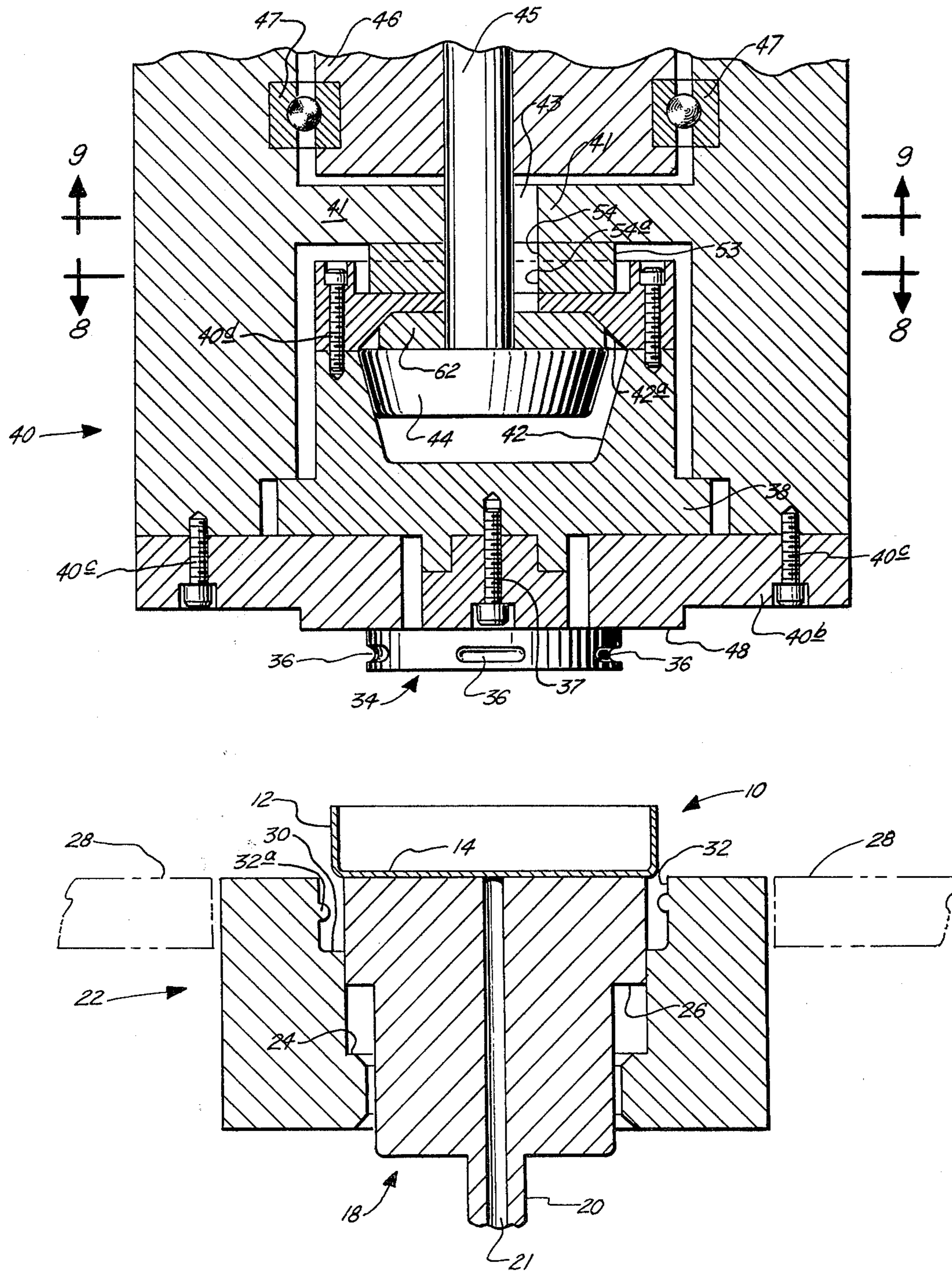


FIG. 1.

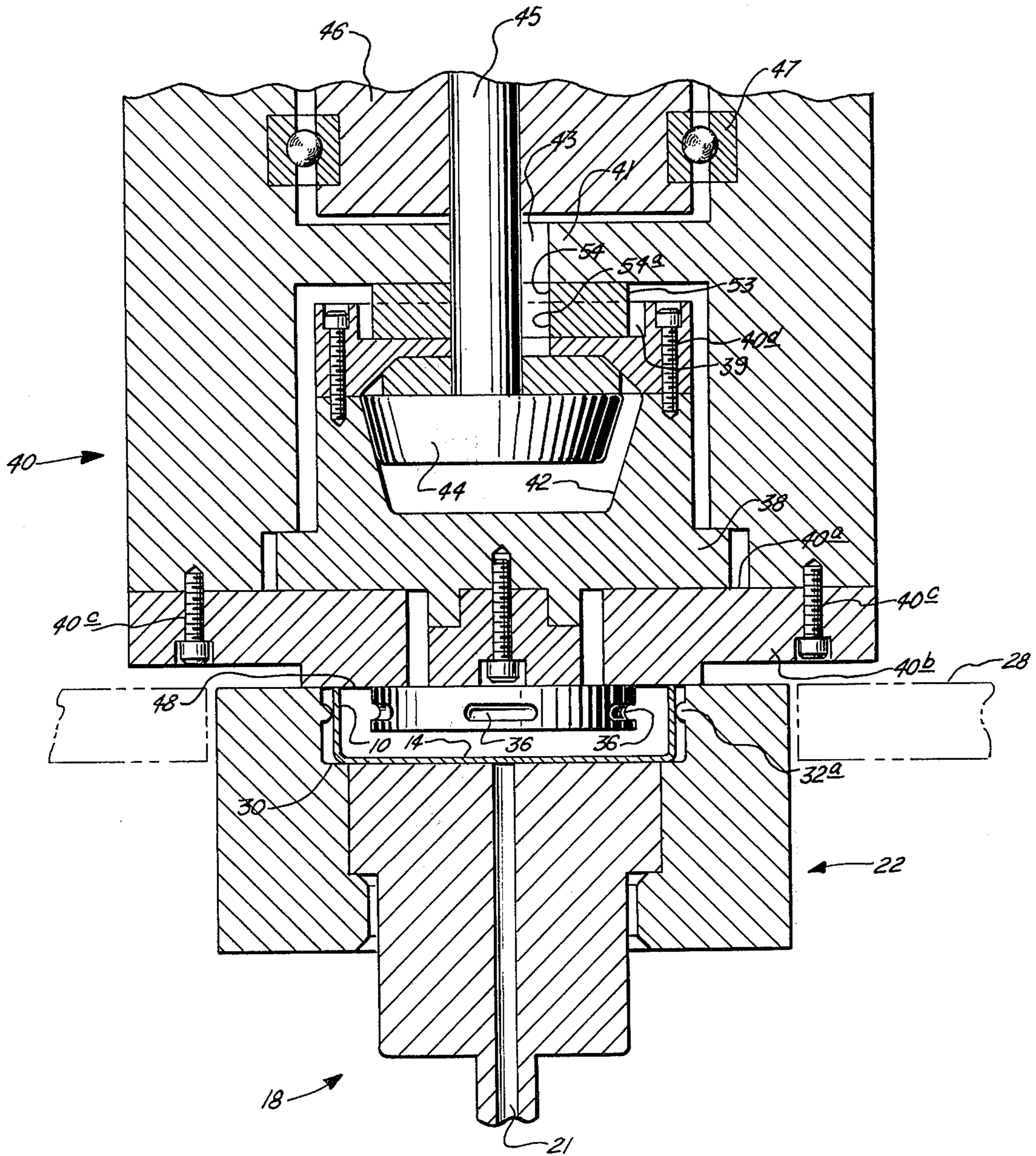


FIG. 2.

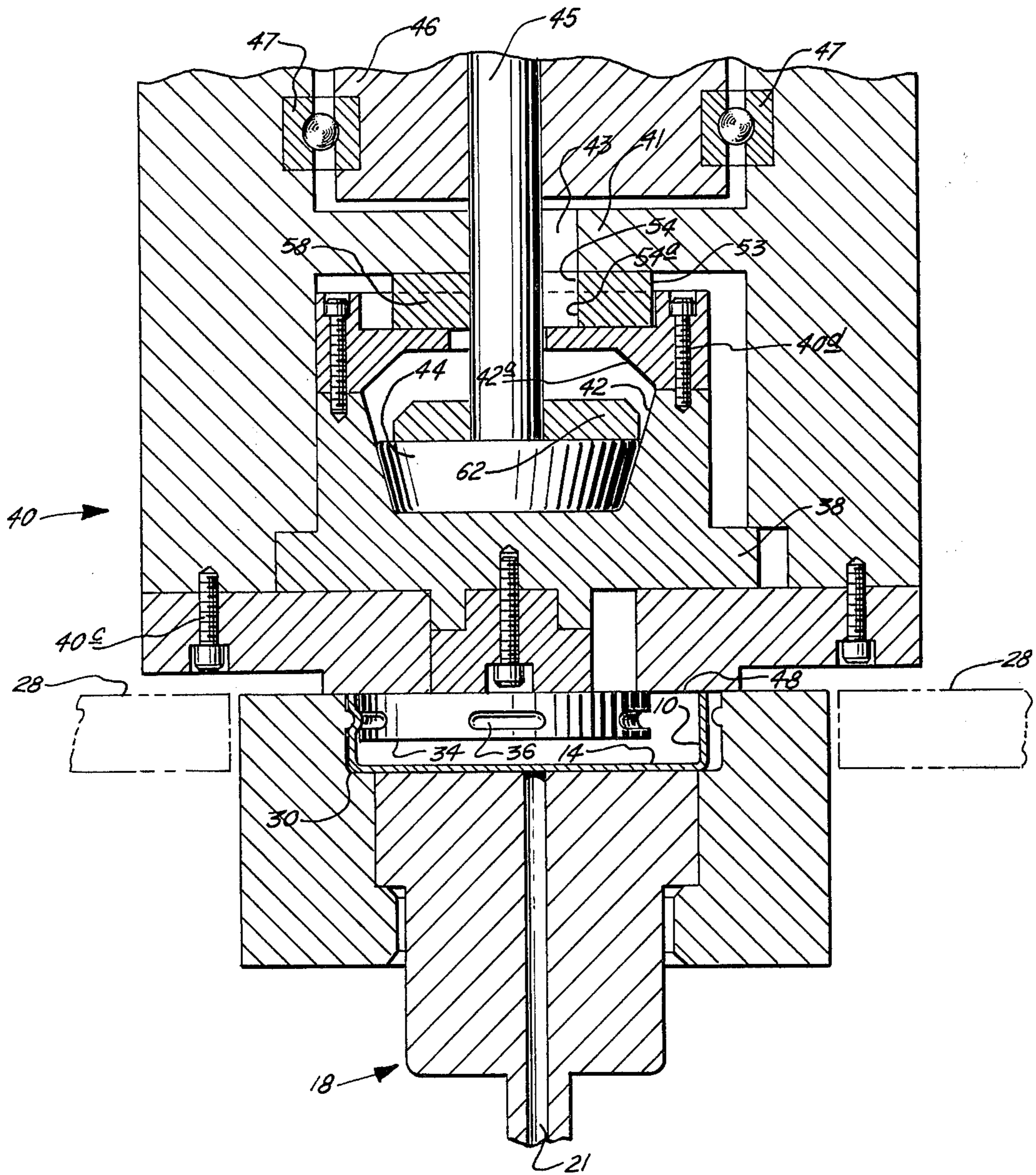


FIG. 3.

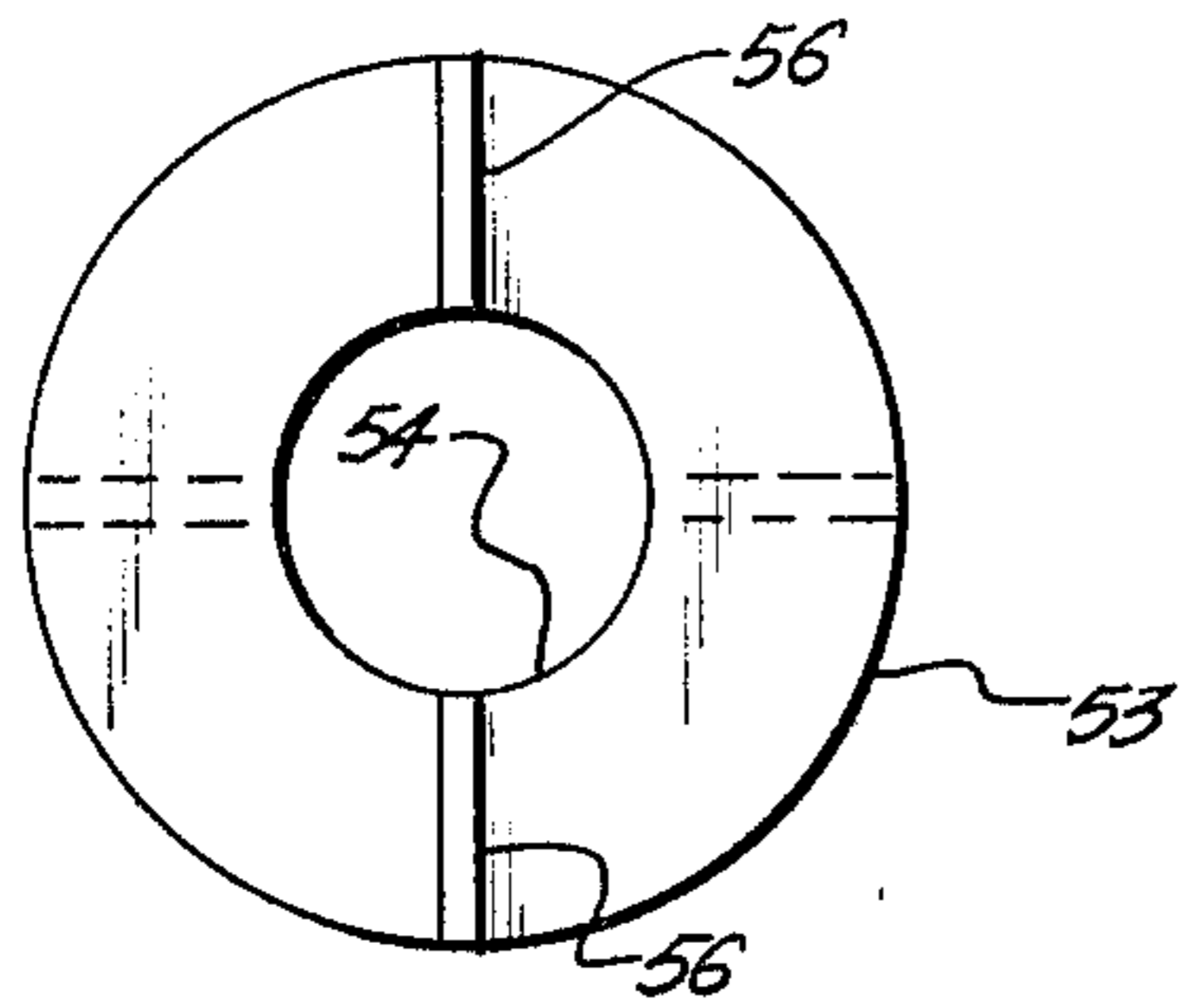


FIG. 4.

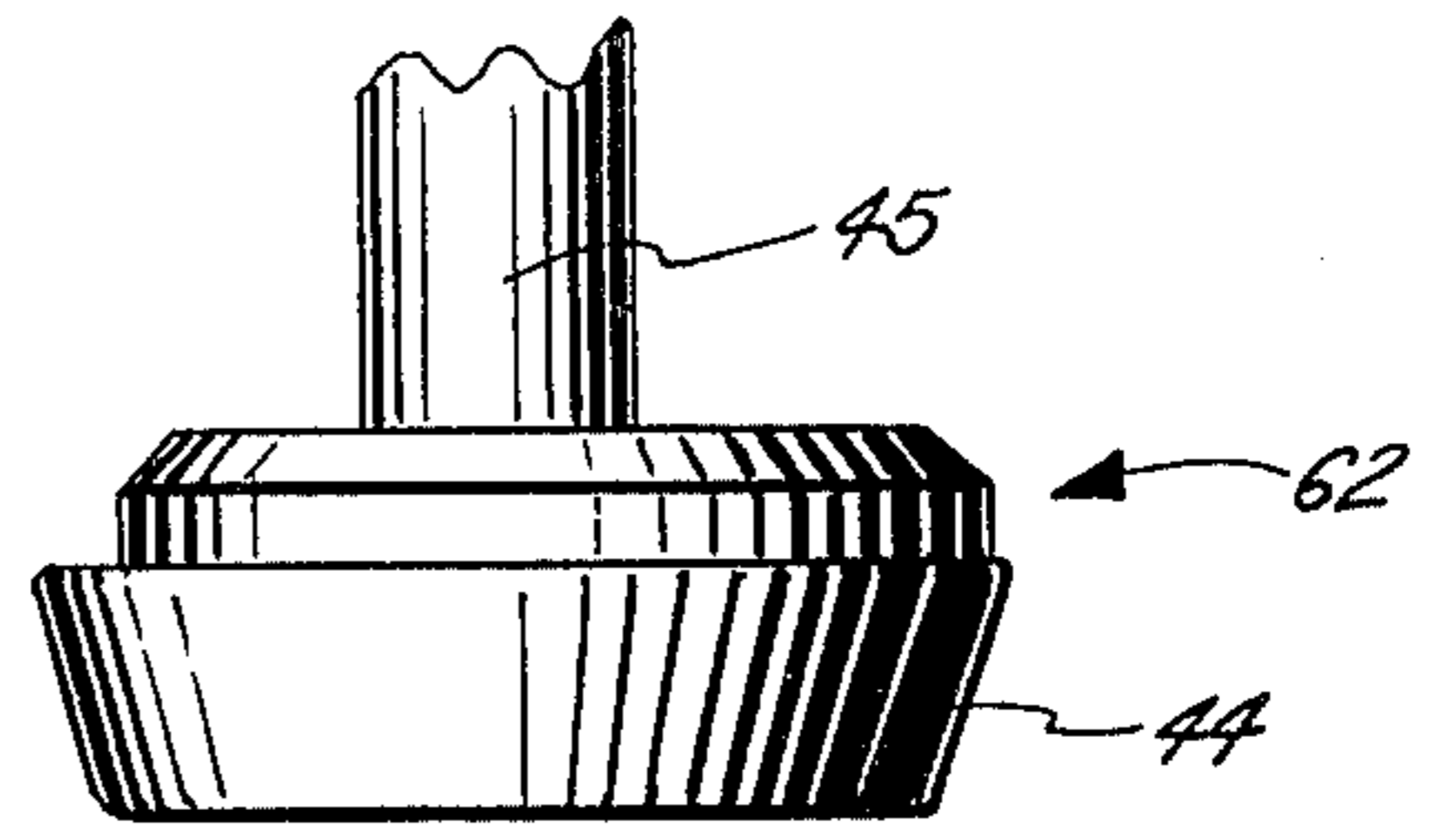


FIG. 6.

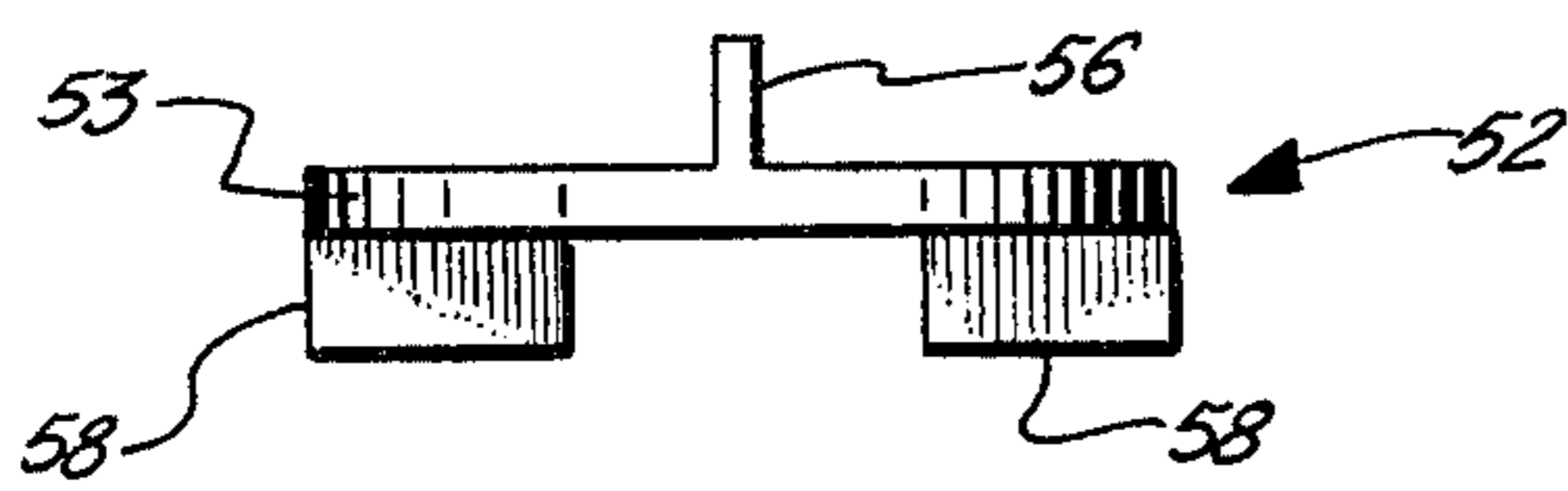


FIG. 5.

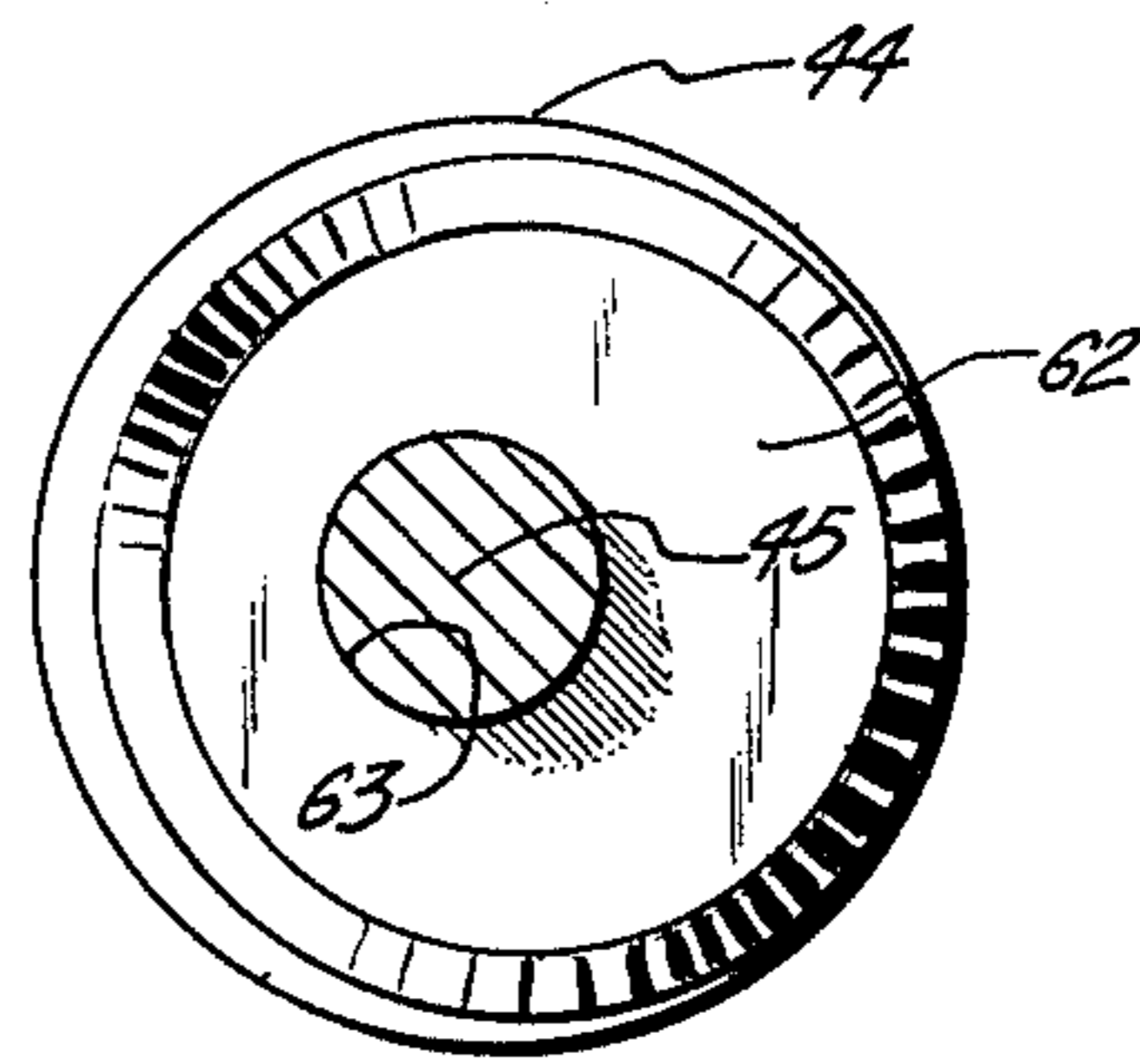


FIG. 7.

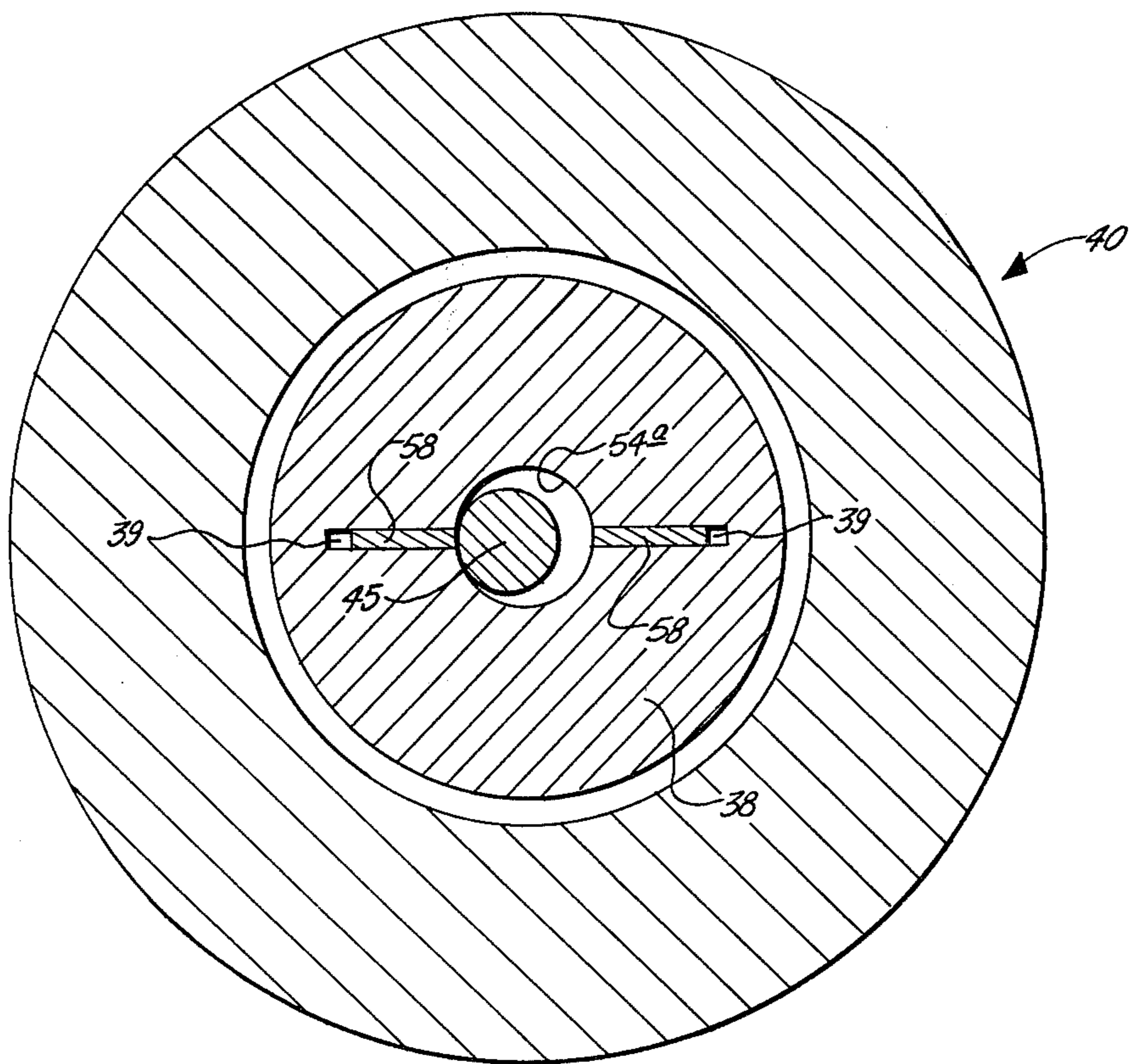


FIG. 8.

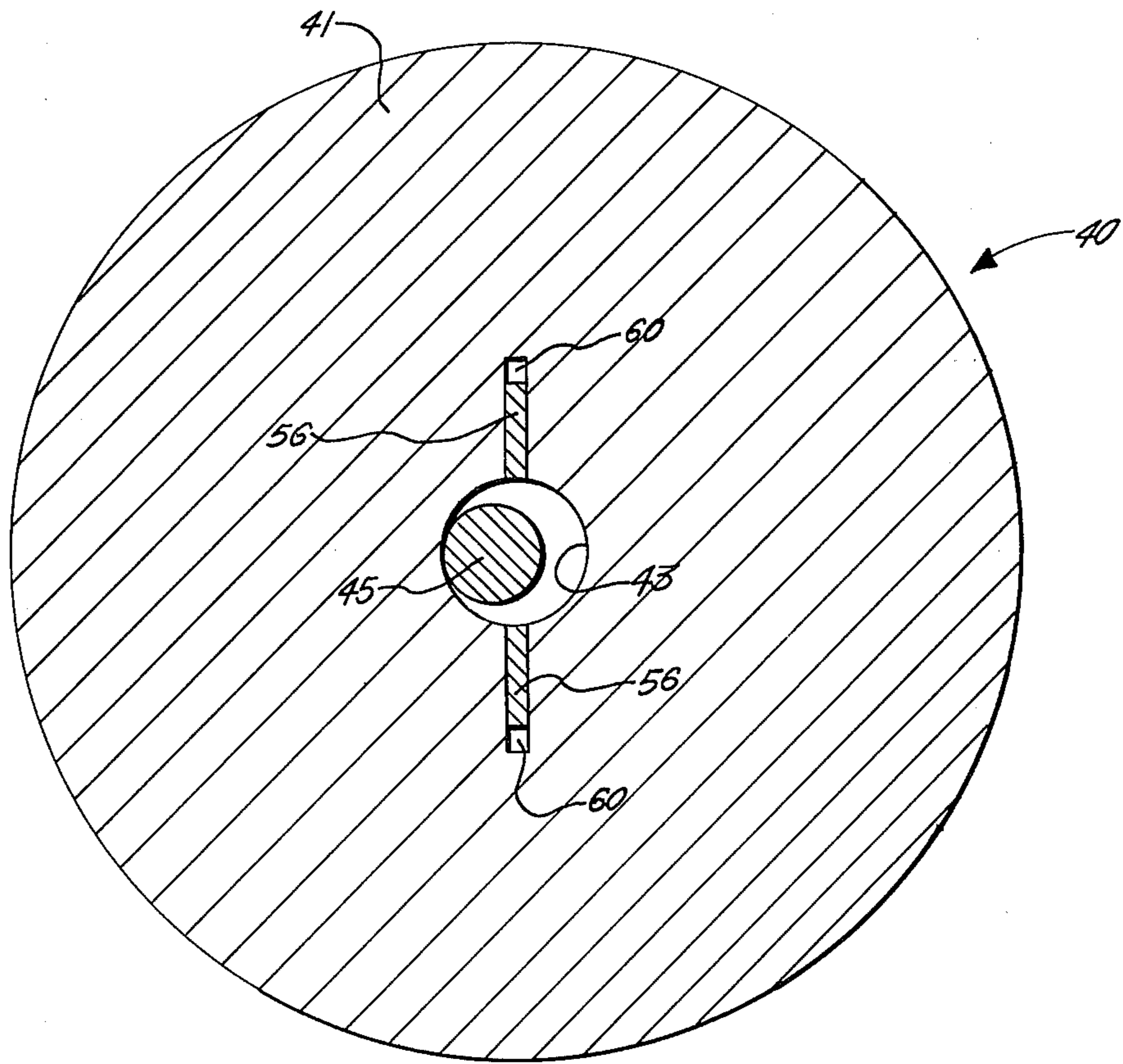


FIG. 9.

APPARATUS FOR THREADING CLOSURES

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is related to threading closures and, more particularly, to threading cylindrical-walled metal closures. Such closures include metal caps which are commonly used on a variety of bottles and jars such as mayonnaise jars, cosmetic containers, medicine bottles, and the like. The metal cap threaded in accordance with the invention consists of a metal shell having a cylindrical wall. The screw threads are formed inwardly on the cylindrical wall.

Various methods are known for threading caps. One of the first methods of threading metal caps utilized two expanding tools in series. The first tool formed segments of threads leaving intervening unthreaded areas, and the second tool completed the thread.

Another method of threading caps is shown in U.S. Pat. No. 2,209,416 issued to Montelione. In this method a rotating chuck was utilized to hold a cap, and a threading tool smaller than the cap was inserted into the cap. After inserting the threading tool into the cap, the tool was moved toward the wall of the cap to form the thread by impressing a pre-threaded portion on the threading tool into the edge of the cap which had previously been turned inwardly. The threading tool would rotate in the same direction as the cap rotated. Furthermore, the threading tool rotates at the same speed as the cap. Such threading equipment necessitates removal of the cap from the cap-forming apparatus and movement to the threading station where the cap must be rotated during the threading operation.

THE INVENTION

In accordance with the present invention there is provided an apparatus for threading a closure having cylindrical walls which includes securing the closure in a stationary nest, inserting a threading tool having indentions on the outside thereof into the interior of the closure, moving the closure into a ring having projecting threads therein around the outside of said closure, moving the threading tool into contact with the interior portion of the closure upon which threads are to be formed, and moving the threading tool around the interior portion of the stationary closure in an orbital path to form threads in the closure without rotating the threading tool about the threading tool axis.

An advantage of the invention is that several excess operations are eliminated by performing the threading operations while the cap is still in the machine which curls the inside edge of the cap. Another advantage is that scratches and dents of caps would be reduced by eliminating conveyors, transfers of the cap from one station to another, and insertion in rotating chucks. Furthermore, floor space and equipment, synchronization and control problems are also reduced. Also, tooling may be quickly changed to thread different sizes of caps.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a partly cut-away, partly cross-sectional, elevational view of the threading apparatus of the present invention showing an unthreaded cap axially aligned with the threading tool;

FIG. 2 is a partly cut-away, partly cross-sectional, elevational view of the threading tool axially aligned

with the unthreaded cap and with the threading tool inserted into the interior of the cap;

FIG. 3 is a partly cut-away, partly cross-sectional, elevational view of the threading tool inserted into the cap and making initial contact with the interior wall of the cap;

FIG. 4 is a top view of a restraining plate;

FIG. 5 is a side view of the plate of FIG. 4;

FIG. 6 is a side view of an actuating cone and centering disc;

FIG. 7 is a top, partly sectional view of the actuating cone and centering disc of FIG. 6;

FIG. 8 is a cross-sectional view taken along lines 8—8 of FIG. 1; and,

FIG. 9 is a cross-sectional view taken along lines 9—9 of FIG. 1.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring now to the drawings, in FIG. 1 is shown a closure or cap generally indicated by the numeral 10 which has a cylindrical side wall 12 in which threads are to be formed, and a top 14. The closure or caps 10 to which the invention has greatest utility are made from metal. Plastic closures or caps may also be used if desired.

The cap in FIG. 1 is supported by a cap support member 18 to which is attached rod 20 for movement of cap support member 18 upwardly and downwardly. Surrounding cap support 18 is the cap nest generally indicated by the numeral 22.

A channel 21 may be formed in member 18 and a vacuum applied thereto to hold cap 10 on member 22. Also, when the cap is formed from a metal which is attracted to a magnet, member 18 may be magnetized to hold cap 10 thereon.

Cap nest 22 has an interior circular shoulder 24 which limits the downward movement of cap support member 18 when the shoulder 24 strikes the circular shoulder 26 of cap support member 18. Cap nest 22 is supported by cap nest support members 28. Cap nest 22 also has a second upper circular shoulder 30 upon which the edge of cap 10 rests during the threading operation. Adjacent to shoulder 30 in cap nest 22 is sidewall 32. Sidewall 32 has a series of projecting threads 32a thereon which correspond in number to indentions 36 in threading tool 34 and are alignable therewith to cooperate in the formation of threads on cap 10. Sidewall 32 contacts the sidewall 12 of cap 10 during the threading operations to prevent horizontal movement of the cap.

In FIG. 1 the threading tool generally indicated by the numeral 34 is shown immediately above and axially aligned with cap 10, cap support member 18, and cap nest 22. Threading tool 34 has a series of indentions 36 located thereon. Indentions 36 are preferably inclined at an angle with the horizontal. Any desired angle may be used.

Threading tool 34 is rigidly connected by bolt 37 to the threading tool carrier, generally indicated by the numeral 38. Threading tool carrier 38 is in turn located in the threading tool carrier housing, generally indicated by the numeral 40.

Threading tool carrier 38 can be seen in FIGS. 1-3 to have a conical recess, generally indicated by the numeral 42, in the top thereof. Conical recess 42 is axially aligned with threading tool 34.

Located in conical recess 42 is actuating cone 44 which is rigidly connected to eccentric shaft 45 which is

in turn slidably connected to rotating sleeve 46. Rotating sleeve 46 rotates in ball bearing 47 which is contained in threading tool carrier housing 40. Cone 44 may be rotatably connected to shaft 45.

Referring now to FIG. 2, the threading tool 34 is shown inserted into the interior of cap 10. The insertion of threading tool 34 into cap 10 is accomplished by moving threading tool carrier housing 40 downwardly until the bottom shoulder 48 contacts cap 10 and forces cap 10 downwardly into cap nest 22 so that the bottom 14 of cap 10 strikes shoulder 30 of cap nest 22. Thus, the downward force of surface 48 on cap 10 prevents rotation of cap 10.

Referring now to FIG. 3, eccentric shaft 45 is seen to be extended downwardly from the position shown in FIG. 2. Eccentric shaft 45 slides downwardly within rotating sleeve 46. The downward movement of shaft 45 forces actuating cone 44 into the bottom of threading tool carrier and thereby slides conical recess 42 laterally or horizontally, thus forcing indentions 36 of threading tool 34 into contact with the cylindrical wall 12 of cap 10 forcing wall 12 into contact with projecting threads 36a to make a thread impression therein. After insertion of the threading tool 34 into cap 10, sleeve 46 is rotated 360° to thread the cap and rotation is stopped. During the 360° rotation of sleeve 46, the threading tool carrier 38 is forced about in an orbital motion thus bringing threading tool 34 into contact with cylindrical wall 12 of cap 10 to form a series of threads around the interior of cylindrical wall 12 of cap 10.

It is preferred that threading tool carrier 38 and threading tool 34 do not rotate about their vertical axes. Any conventional means may be used to prevent rotation. In the embodiment shown in the drawings a plate, generally indicated by the numeral 52, and shown in detail in FIGS. 4 and 5, is utilized to prevent rotation of threading tool carrier 38 and threading tool 34.

Plate 52 includes a flat disc 53 having a hole 54 in the center thereof for receipt of eccentric shaft 45. Hole 54 must be sufficiently large enough in diameter to permit shaft 45 to orbit therein. Two guides 56—56 and 58—58 are aligned on the top and bottom of disc 53, the two top guides being aligned at a right (90°) angle to the bottom guides.

As can best be seen in FIG. 8, threading tool carrier 38 has a slot 39 in the top thereof for sliding receipt of guides 58—58 and a hole 54a therein for receipt of shaft 45. As can be seen in FIGS. 1-3 and FIG. 9, threading tool carrier housing 40 has a horizontal disc portion 41 located above plate 52 which has a hole 43 therein for receipt of shaft 45. Hole 43 must be sufficiently large enough for shaft 45 to orbit therein, and preferably, has the same diameter as hole 54 in plate 52. Slot 60 is formed in the bottom of horizontal disc portion 41 for sliding receipt of guides 56—56 of plate 52. Thus, rotation of threading tool carrier 38 and threading tool 34 is prevented.

Threading tool carrier 38 slides about the interior of threading tool carrier housing 40 in an orbital motion. Threading tool carrier 38 has a flat lower surface which slides upon flat interior surface 40a of threading tool carrier housing 40.

A centering disc, generally indicated by the numeral 62, shown in FIGS. 1-3, 6, and 7, is located at the top of actuating cone 44 to center threading tool carrier 38 in the center of housing 40 when actuating cone 44 is moved to its uppermost position as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. Centering disc 62 has a hole 63 in the top thereof

for receipt of shaft 45. The upper edge 65 is beveled to nest against the beveled upper edge 42a of recess 42. Centering disc 62 is rigidly connected to cone 44 in the position shown in FIGS. 6 and 7 such that no portion of disc 62 extends outwardly past the outermost edge of cone 44.

After the entire cap is threaded, rotating sleeve 46 is stopped and eccentric shaft 45 is withdrawn to the upper position shown in FIG. 1. Threading tool carrier housing 40 is then moved upwardly to remove threading tool 34 from the interior of cap 10. Cap 10 now has threads therein and the threading operation is complete. Cap support member 18 then returns the bottom of cap 10 to the level of the top of cap nest 22.

An advantage of the invention is that different size caps can be threaded by quickly changing the threading tool 34, nest 22, and the lower portion 40b of threading tool housing 40 by removing bolts 40c and 37. If the depth of the threads varies sufficiently, threading tool carrier 38 and actuating cone 44 can be replaced. Threading tool carrier 38 may be separated to gain access to actuating cone 44 by extending shaft 45 downwardly and removing bolts 40d.

Although the preferred embodiments of the present invention have been disclosed and described in detail above, it should be understood that the invention is in no sense limited thereby and its scope is to be determined by that of the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for forming lug threads in a closure having a top surface and an integral cylindrical wall comprising:

- a. an apparatus support means;
- b. nest means fixedly attached to said support means, said nest means having a vertically extending cylindrical bore therein with
 - (i) an upper section having a plurality of inwardly directed thread forming members extending from the sidewall thereof and a first upwardly facing circular shoulder therebelow,
 - (ii) a lower, smaller diameter section terminating in an upwardly facing shoulder, and
 - (iii) a bottom opening below said lower section with a diameter smaller than said lower section;
- c. closure support means slidably received in said nest means for moving a cap vertically into and out of said upper section of said nest means, and having a downwardly facing shoulder adapted to abut said second upwardly facing shoulder when in the fully retracted position and a lowermost portion extending through said bottom opening of said nest means;
- d. horizontally movable, cylindrical threading tool means having indentions on the outside thereof matching said thread forming members on said nest means for forming threads in the cylindrical wall of said closure;
- e. means for vertically inserting and withdrawing said threading tool means in said closure;
- f. threading tool housing means axially aligned with said nest means and having threading tool carrier means mounted therein which is rigidly connected to said threading tool means, said carrier means including a carrier having a conical recess that has the shape of an inverted truncated cone located in its interior, and a truncated conical actuator adapted to slide into and out of said recess to move said threading tool carrier means transversely to

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bring said threading tool means into contact with said cylindrical wall of said closure; and

g. orbiting means for moving said threading tool means in an orbital path whereby the axis of said threading tool moves in a circle about the axis of said closure while preventing rotational and axial movement of said threading tool about its own axis.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said conical actuator is connected to a shaft.

3. The apparatus of claim 2 wherein said shaft is slidably mounted in a rotatable sleeve.

4. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein the vertical axis of said shaft is parallel, and separated some distance from, the vertical axis of said rotatable sleeve.

5. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said rotatable sleeve is rotatably mounted in said threading tool housing means.

6. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said threading tool carrier means is provided with centering means for centering said threading tool carrier means in said threading tool housing means.

7. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said centering means comprises a centering disc mounted on the top of

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said conical actuator, said centering disc having an upper beveled edge which engages a beveled edge at the top of said conical recess to center said threading tool carrier means in said housing means.

8. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said threading tool carrier means is connected to said housing means by a slidable plate means to prevent rotation of said threading tool carrier means and said threading tool means relative to said housing means.

9. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein said slidable plate means has guide means on the top and bottom thereof, said guide means on the top of said slidable plate means being adapted for sliding receipt within a slot located on said threading tool carrier housing means and said guide means located on the bottom of said slidable plate means being adapted for receipt within a slot located on the top of said threading tool carrier means.

10. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein said guide means on the bottom and said guide means on the top of said slidable plate means are placed at an angle of 90° to each other.

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